

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 463

By Rochelle

A RESOLUTION to honor Clifton E. "Cliff" Abel on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this legislative body should recognize those citizens who in their years of work have performed with extraordinary dedication and unprecedented devotion; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Abel is one such outstanding person who has served with enthusiasm and responsibility for 36 years with the Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury, Division of State Audit and as Director of the Office of Legislative Administration; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Abel exemplifies the spirit and dedication that is characteristic of a great Tennessean, having strived to benefit legislative employees over the years of his service and having faithfully handled the payroll, expenses and budgetary matters of the legislative branch; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Abel was born in Dayton, Tennessee, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jim Abel, and grew up with brothers Elbert and Felix and sister Helen in an all-American community in Rhea County, a locale rich in local wisdom, lore and humor; and

WHEREAS, his youth was spent with friends and relatives in school; on the Abel farm which is still operated by the family; in 4-H showing livestock; and generally being involved in school, church and related activities; and

WHEREAS, as a result of his upbringing in that Eden-like environment, Cliff Abel has been capable over the years of producing a never-ending stream of anecdotes, tall tales, and

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accounts of the wisdom, foibles and humor of his many relatives, friends and neighbors in Dayton and Rhea County; and

WHEREAS, some of these sagas were recounted and others occurred in Abel Hardware purchased by Mr. Jim Abel in 1929 after he had worked there for sixteen years; Abel Hardware remained a town fixture until its closure in 1997; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Abel attended the public schools in Dayton, graduated from Rhea Central High School, and received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting from Tennessee Technological University; and

WHEREAS, prior to his starting upon a career as a state auditor in 1961, Cliff Abel left school with an ROTC commission; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Abel served a tour of duty in the U.S. Army in Germany, resulting in an odd linguistic quirk of occasional lapses into Tennessee accented *Deutsch*, which continue to crop up in Cliff's speech to this day; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Abel is an active and vital part of his community and is a committed member of First Baptist Church of Nashville, where he has served faithfully as Deacon and Church Treasurer, and has taken part in several volunteer missions to Hungary, Poland and Canada; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Abel is an avid sports fan and enthusiast for the Vanderbilt University basketball program, having served for many years as team statistician, but he never fails to follow the fortunes of the University of Tennessee's athletic endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Abel has enjoyed the love and support of his children, Chad and Tonya, and his grandchildren Cheyenne and Cody; and

WHEREAS, Cliff Abel's manifest warmth, humanity, and unfailing friendliness is fondly remembered by the members of this General Assembly, the staff of the Office of Legislative Administration, and his many friends among the staff of the legislative branch and throughout state government; and

WHEREAS, The State of Tennessee has, for the past 36 years, benefited from the service of this man of unchallenged integrity and moral character, who put aside personal concerns to further the cause of responsible government; and

WHEREAS, individuals possessing the range of Cliff Abel's sterling qualities are not often seen among us, and it is fitting that we honor Cliff Abel for his faithful service and his invaluable contributions to the people of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we extend to Clifton E. "Cliff" Abel our best wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and continued success in future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.